

Senate Resolution 110 - Introduced

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 110

BY COURNOYER, LOFGREN, and GREENE

1 A Resolution recognizing the importance of Minor League
2 Baseball in Iowa and demanding that Major League
3 Baseball abandon its efforts to eliminate Major
4 League Baseball parent-club affiliation with certain
5 franchises located in Iowa.

6 WHEREAS, Iowa has a long and rich connection to
7 baseball, serving as the birthplace of over 200 Major
8 League Baseball players, including Hall of Famer
9 Bob Feller and 2019 World Series Champion Jeremy
10 Hellickson, and providing the setting for one of the
11 most popular baseball films of all time, Field of
12 Dreams, in which a ballpark in rural Iowa is famously
13 confused for heaven; and

14 WHEREAS, Major League Baseball announced that the
15 Field of Dreams property in Dyersville will host a
16 Major League Baseball game featuring the New York
17 Yankees and Chicago White Sox in August of 2020, with
18 Commissioner Rob Manfred recognizing Iowa's unique role
19 in baseball culture and the rustic backdrop that Iowa
20 provides by stating, "We look forward to celebrating
21 the movie's enduring message of how baseball brings
22 people together at this special cornfield in Iowa"; and

23 WHEREAS, the history of professional baseball in
24 Iowa traces back over 100 years to the Keokuk Westerns,
25 who played part of the 1875 season in the National
26 Association, which is considered the first professional
27 baseball league; and

28 WHEREAS, professional baseball first appeared in

1 Davenport and Des Moines in 1879, Burlington in 1889,
2 Cedar Rapids in 1890, and Clinton in 1895, with Des
3 Moines, Burlington, and Cedar Rapids each hosting over
4 100 seasons of professional baseball; and

5 WHEREAS, the Sports Business Journal recognized
6 the Quad Cities region as the top minor league sports
7 market in the United States in 2015 and named Des
8 Moines as the top minor league sports market in 2017,
9 owing in large part to the entertainment and economic
10 value that Minor League Baseball teams provide in each
11 market; and

12 WHEREAS, the Quad Cities River Bandits create an
13 estimated annual economic impact of \$18.7 million in
14 the Quad Cities region; additionally, the Quad Cities
15 Convention and Visitors Bureau has stated that more
16 than half of the annual hotel room nights spent in
17 the Quad Cities region are attributable to the River
18 Bandits and other local sporting events; and

19 WHEREAS, the Clinton LumberKings, the only remaining
20 charter club of the Midwest League, create an estimated
21 annual economic impact of \$6.56 million in Clinton
22 County, which contributed to approximately 75 percent
23 of the total tax revenue the county received from
24 domestic tourism in 2018; and

25 WHEREAS, according to the Economic Development
26 Authority, the Burlington Bees have supported, directly
27 and indirectly, \$4.7 million in wages in Des Moines
28 County; and

29 WHEREAS, Iowans support our Minor League Baseball
30 venues, which provide affordable, family-friendly

1 entertainment and are accessible to all Iowans and
2 visitors; and

3 WHEREAS, over 40 million fans bought tickets to
4 Minor League Baseball games in 2019, of which nearly 1
5 million were purchased at Iowa ballparks, meaning that
6 a state that makes up less than 1 percent of the United
7 States population was responsible for over 2 percent
8 of Minor League Baseball ticket sales, demonstrating
9 Iowa's devotion for America's pastime at the Minor
10 League Baseball level; and

11 WHEREAS, Major League Baseball wants to eliminate
12 approximately 25 percent of the Minor League Baseball
13 teams in the country, including the Quad City River
14 Bandits, the Clinton LumberKings, and the Burlington
15 Bees; and

16 WHEREAS, many Iowans live at least three hours
17 away from the nearest Major League Baseball team and
18 are "blackout" from watching six of the closest
19 geographic Major League Baseball teams on no-cost
20 television, making local Minor League Baseball teams
21 the best opportunity for fans to see potential Major
22 League Baseball players; and

23 WHEREAS, each Minor League Baseball team in Iowa has
24 been a temporary home for many Major League Baseball
25 stars; the Iowa Cubs have rostered many heroes from
26 the 2016 Chicago Cubs team that broke a 108-year
27 championship drought by winning the World Series; the
28 Cedar Rapidsernels featured reigning American League
29 Most Valuable Player Mike Trout; the Burlington Bees
30 featured Mark Buehrle, who would win the 2005 World

1 Series with the Chicago White Sox, and also featured
2 Hall of Famers Paul Molitor, Billy Williams, and 2020
3 inductee Larry Walker; the Clinton LumberKings featured
4 Orel Hershiser, Mike Scioscia, and Dave Stewart, all
5 of whom played in the 1988 World Series and each of
6 whom would win at least one World Series Championship
7 during his respective career; and the Quad Cities River
8 Bandits featured beloved Minnesota Twins catcher Joe
9 Mauer, who won three batting titles during his career,
10 and Joe Maddon, who managed the Chicago Cubs to victory
11 in the 2016 World Series; NOW THEREFORE,

12 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, That the Senate
13 stands in support of Iowa's Minor League Baseball
14 teams by demanding that Major League Baseball abandon
15 its efforts to eliminate the Major League Baseball
16 parent-club affiliation of the Quad Cities River
17 Bandits, the Clinton LumberKings, and the Burlington
18 Bees; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Senate appreciates
20 the economic and cultural benefits that Iowa's Minor
21 League Baseball teams bring to their respective
22 communities and to the entire state of Iowa.